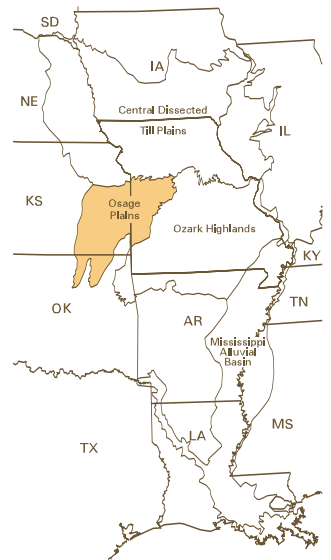


Osage Plains

The Osage Plains are greatly influenced by the Great Plains to the west. Once over 80 percent tallgrass prairie, vast herds of bison and raging wildfires shaped the region's plant communities and wildlife. These grasslands were never affected by glaciers, resulting in shallower soils that are much less fertile than those of north Missouri. Savannas occurred along "breaks" in the landscape. Thin bands of forest were restricted to valleys, particularly along major water courses where rich bottomlands formed extensive wetlands.

While most of the Osage Plains are now converted to pastures of non-native grasses or cropland, there are significant opportunities to restore functioning grasslands that will conserve prairie plants and animals.



Photos: Prairie Landscape: Jim Rathert,
Missouri Department of Conservation
Greater Prairie-chicken: ©
Noppadol Paothong

Osage Plains

Animal Targets of the Osage Plains

Forest

Yellow-billed Cuckoo • Cerulean Warbler •
Prothonotary Warbler

Woodland

Chuck-will's-widow • Red-headed Woodpecker
• Eastern Wood-pewee • Baltimore Oriole • Orchard
Oriole

Savanna

Northern Bobwhite • Brown Thrasher • Field Sparrow •
Harris's Sparrow

Prairie

Grassland Crayfish • An Andrenid Bee (*Andrena
beameri*) • Prairie Mole Cricket • Regal Fritillary • Great
Plains Narrow-mouthed Toad • Northern Crawfish Frog
• Southern Prairie Skink • Western Slender Glass Lizard
• Bullsnae • Upland Sandpiper • Swainson's Hawk •
Northern Harrier • Greater Prairie Chicken • Short-
eared Owl • Scissor-tailed Flycatcher • Sprague's Pipit •
Loggerhead Shrike • Bell's Vireo • Dickcissel •
Henslow's Sparrow • Grasshopper Sparrow • Lark
Sparrow • Smith's Longspur • Eastern Meadowlark •
Black-tailed Jackrabbit

Wetland

Rusty Blackbird

River and Stream

Blacknose Shiner • Freckled Madtom • Ghost Shiner •
Logperch • Redfin Darter



Regal Fritillary



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher



Bullsnake